



ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE WITH AGENTS

Differentiation of Agents

Substance	Vital signs	Eyes	Chest	Other
Cyanide	Early ↑ resp rate	Normal or dilated pupils	Clear early	Sudden collapse, convulsions, acyanotic
Nerve Agents	↓ heart rate ↓→resp rate	Pinpoint pupils even in low light	Wheezes, rhonchi	↑ salivation, lacrimation, sweating, vomiting, diarrhea, convulsions
Choking agents	↑ resp rate	Burning, irritation	Cough, excess secretions	Odor: ammonia, straw/grass
Blister agents	↑→resp rate	Irritation	Irritation, cough	Delayed skin lesions, worsening of symptoms when leave the exposure site

Agent Persistency in Environment

The first step in treatment is removal of the victim from the exposure site. Depending on weather conditions the substance may persist in the environment and be considered a continued exposure threat. The following is the hierarchy of such persistency.

Substance by rank, most to least	Approximate persistency
Soman(GD)	Relatively persistent in soil, unknown on clothing
VX	2-6 days in soil, persistent on clothing
Tabun	1-1.5 days in soil, unknown on clothing
Mustard	Impure(H): persistent in soil, hrs to days on clothing Distilled (HD): 2 weeks-3 yrs in soil, hrs to days on clothing
Lewisite	In soil; days, on clothing hrs to days
Sarin	In soil 2-24 hrs, unknown on clothing
Cyanide	In soil < 1 hr, none on clothing
Phosgene	In soil 2 hrs, non-persistent on clothing
Chlorine	Essentially none depending on wind



Note: This information was produced in consult with the New Jersey Poison Information and Education System.

